

Menashi went to work figuring out how to let the schools that scammed them off the hook. Be clear—it was not Menashi just doing his job advocating for someone else's bad policy; he wrote the memo. It is clear that he actually supported and supports Betsy DeVos's radical agenda.

Now they want to put him on the Federal bench so he can put his thumb on the scales of justice for shady for-profit schools over students and corporations over workers and, as I said, for Wall Street and insurance companies over patients. We have seen that from judge after judge after judge with President Trump, but even by those Trump standards, Menashi is particularly bad.

It always comes down to whose side you are on. Are you a judge who will stand on the side of workers or stand on the side of corporations? Will you stand on the side of students—struggling students, moderate-income and sometimes low-income students trying to build better lives for themselves—or on the side of failed sham schools? His record is clear.

The stakes for Ohio are too high to give Steve Menashi a lifetime appointment on the Federal bench.

#### PENSIONS

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, yesterday we got another reminder of the urgency in the pension crisis facing more than 1 million workers and retirees with the news that Dean Foods is filing for bankruptcy. The company is part of the Central States Pension Fund. The bankruptcy puts the pension fund that much closer to insolvency, that much closer to having to turn to the PBGC for help, and that much closer to knocking down the dominoes that could bring down our whole multiemployer pension system and potentially and even likely trigger a recession. We have to act now for the sake of our economy, for the sake of thousands of small businesses, and for the sake of a million Americans who are on the verge of facing massive cuts to the pensions they earned.

This crisis affects thousands of Ohioans. It affects the massive Central States Pension Plan, the United Workers Pension Plan, the Ironworkers Local 17 Pension Plan, the Southwest Ohio carpenters, the bakers and confectioners, and many others. It touches every State in this Nation. If the system collapses, it won't be just retirees who will feel the pain. Current workers will be stuck paying into pensions they will never receive. Small businesses will be left drowning in pension liability they can't afford to pay. That will have ripple effects throughout the economy. If we do nothing, this can trigger a recession on par with the housing crisis. We know who gets hurt the worst. It is the small businesses, workers, and the retirees who are counting on these pensions to survive.

People in this town so often don't understand the collective bargaining

process. People give up dollars today at the bargaining table for the promise of a secure retirement with good healthcare and a pension. These workers' lives and livelihoods will be devastated if Congress doesn't do its job.

I think about the words of Larry Ward at a hearing in Ohio last year. He said:

I don't understand how it is that Congress would even consider asking us to take a cut to my pension or to see it going away, when it had no problem sending billions to the Wall Street crooks who caused this problem in the first place. They used that to pay themselves bonuses. We use our pensions to pay for medicine and food and heat.

Think about that. Wall Street uses this pension money for bonuses. Mr. Ward and his other workers and retirees use their pensions to pay for medicine and food and heat. There is something wrong with this picture. It is bad enough that Wall Street squandered workers' money; it is worse that the government, which is supposed to look out for these folks, is ignoring the promise to these workers.

I know there are Senators in both parties working in good faith to fix this, but this bankruptcy is a reminder that we are running short on time to come up with the bipartisan solution we need.

It comes back to the dignity of work. When work has dignity, we honor the retirement security that people earned. When work has dignity, we fight for those workers, we honor workers, and we respect workers.

I urge my colleagues in this body, let's pass a solution that honors their work, that honors the dignity of work, and that keeps our promise to the people who make this country work.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

#### PRESIDENT ERDOGAN

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, the United States is always grateful to receive heads of State from around the world. Heads of State from around the world come to the United States because they know we are 25 percent of the world's economy. We are the most powerful military in the world. We are the most moral Nation in the world in how we manage freedom of the press, freedom of speech, and freedom of opportunity for all people within our country. When we see a problem in our country, we work to address that.

So with that, we are welcoming another head of State to the United States today, President Erdogan of Turkey. Turkey has been a long-standing NATO ally. NATO was formed in the late 1940s. Turkey and Greece were the first two countries that came into NATO after its formation in the 1940s. Turkey has been a member of NATO since 1952. We have a very important military base based in Turkey, Incirlik Air Force Base. It is key in the war against terror in that entire region.

Turkey hosts the largest Syrian refugee population. Turkey has been very engaged in NATO, filling all of its billets and all of its requirements. They have worked to be a good partner. They have partnered with us in not only the War on Terror in multiple different countries in the regions, but they have been very faithful to engage with NATO as a whole.

But something is happening in Turkey that I hope President Trump and President Erdogan had a very frank discussion on because since 2016, President Erdogan of Turkey is shifting Turkey away from NATO toward Russia, toward a more authoritative regime, changing their Constitution to give more power to Erdogan and to whoever his successor is—if there is a successor to Erdogan, if he doesn't maintain power and keep it forever from here on out.

There was a mayoral election in Istanbul that Erdogan didn't agree with, and so he declared it null and void and forced another election in Istanbul, hoping to get the outlook he wanted, but the Turkish people actually voted even more so against Erdogan in the next election in Istanbul, putting in someone who directly opposed Erdogan and his party.

President Erdogan recently imprisoned an American pastor who had served more than 20 years in Turkey, serving people of all faiths and all backgrounds in the beautiful city of Izmir. He rounded up Andrew Brunson with tens of thousands of other people whom President Erdogan and his government considered a threat, and most of them they have been held without charges for years now. There are thousands of people right now who are still awaiting their day in court from the 2016 coup. Not knowing if any of these folks were actually connected to the coup, they rounded up teachers, journalists, law enforcement individuals—just everyone they could round up that they had any suspicion of and imprisoned them and said: We will bring charges to you later. Thousands are still waiting for “later.”

I happened to be in Turkey in December of 2016 to personally meet with the Ministry of Justice in Ankara to talk about Andrew Brunson, an American swept up in that time period who had nothing to do with the coup that happened in 2016. President Erdogan solely had the ability to get him released but held him for years with all kinds of wild accusations against an American missionary who had been there for decades.

Turkey continues to be able to focus on the Kurdish Syrians just south of their border. I have to tell you, there are a group of the Kurds whom I understand President Erdogan should be attentive to. There is a certain group called the PKK. The United States also considers that Kurdish group terrorists and have for decades. That particular group of Kurds who are in Syria have traveled into Turkey and carried out

car bombs and have killed hundreds of people in terrorist attacks in Turkey. President Erdogan has every reason to pay attention to that particular group of Kurds, and I understand his frustration that the United States partnered with them to take out ISIS, but the fact was, Turkey would not come across the border to help us take out ISIS, and so we found partners who would take on ISIS with us—and they did.

Now Erdogan wants to push those folks back. His methods are quite brutal in the process. When we went into Afghanistan, we understood that all Afghan people were not our enemy—the Taliban was, al-Qaida was. That was our enemy, and they found their way among the populations. We were exceptionally careful when we went into Afghanistan to protect the Afghan people, yet find ways to take the battles to the Taliban and to al-Qaida. Erdogan's methods were to come across the border with tanks and heavy artillery and start shelling cities in Syria, knowing there were some PKK in those villages, and so they just shelled them all. Erdogan and some of his thugs also came across with some of the other groups who were working with the Turks. We also have footage of them taking prisoners and shooting them beside the road and leaving their bodies there. These people had already surrendered. They were people who had already been handcuffed, and they executed them beside the road. That is a war crime that we should follow up with, and I hope President Trump had a very frank conversation with President Erdogan about following up on war crimes.

Just to add to all of our difficulties right now with President Erdogan, in the past couple of years, he has shifted his attention toward Russia and has now completed a purchase of a Russian air defense system. They are the very first and only NATO country ever to purchase Russian military equipment. That equipment is not interoperable with the rest of NATO. This is Russian equipment that is specifically designed to take the fight to the F-35. Turkey believes it is going to purchase the F-35 from the United States, and they also believe they can purchase the S-400 from Russia and have them side by

side. Well, they are wrong. Years ago, Congress passed the Countering American Adversaries Through Sanctions Act, commonly known as CAATSA. It was a very clear message to anyone who buys Russian military equipment that there are sanctions coming to your country, and it is clear. We have applied those sanctions in the past, and those sanctions need to be applied to Turkey now.

In addition to that, Senator SHAHEEN and I have partnered together to pass a bill to block Turkey from taking any of the F-35s—not trained in the equipment, not simulators, no F-35s can go to Turkey. If they are interested in buying Russian air defense systems, they understand clearly what that means because we have made it clear to the Turks for 2 years now: If you buy Russian equipment, you cannot also have the F-35. President Erdogan was aware of that. His administration was aware of that, and I hope President Trump made it clear to him today, as clear as this Congress has made it clear, on a bipartisan basis, that Turkey cannot have the F-35 and also have Russian military equipment at the same time. That is incompatible. We will continue to make that very clear in the days ahead in our legislation, and I believe a vote will not even be close to send a message to Turkey that we are interested in maintaining our friendship and our NATO ally, but our NATO ally needs to make a decision if they are a NATO ally or if they are a Russian ally because those two are not congruent.

I hope that was the conversation that happened today. We will find out in the days ahead, but even if it was not, I hope President Erdogan and the Turkish Embassy hears it clearly now. This Congress would look forward to partnering with Turkey again in the future, as we have for decades in the past. We have had an economic relationship, a military relationship, and a genuine friendship with Turkey, but we do not know who Turkey is anymore. We don't recognize the Turkey of today from Turkey 5 years ago. We would never come to your country and beat up protesters in the street as President Erdogan's security thugs did last year in the United States. We would never do that to your country. We would

never counter NATO just to spite you, and we would certainly stay aligned with a friend who has been a friend for decades.

To the Turkish people, our beef is not with you. Our frustration is with the regime that is currently directing your country away from its traditional allies. We continue to reach our hand out to the Turkish people, and we continue to say to President Erdogan: This can be different in the days ahead, as it has been in the past, but some things need to change, and we are not the ones who walked away.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

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#### ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. LANKFORD. If there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:40 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, November 14, 2019, at 10 a.m.

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#### NOMINATIONS

Executive nomination received by the Senate:

##### DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

ELAINE A. MCCUSKER, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE (COMPTROLLER), VICE DAVID L. NORQUIST, RESIGNED.

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#### CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by the Senate November 13, 2019:

##### DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

CHAD F. WOLF, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE UNDER SECRETARY FOR STRATEGY, POLICY, AND PLANS, DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY.

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#### WITHDRAWAL

Executive Message transmitted by the President to the Senate on November 13, 2019 withdrawing from further Senate consideration the following nomination:

DOUG MANCHESTER, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE BAHAMAS, WHICH WAS SENT TO THE SENATE ON JANUARY 16, 2019.